

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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HIS BIRTHDAY.

It is his birthday,— his, the Holy Child!
And innocent childhood blossoms now anew,
Under the dropping of celestial dew
Into its heart, out of this heavenlier flower,
That penetrates the lowliest roof-tree bower
With fragrance of an Eden undefiled:
O happy children, praise him in your mirth,—
The Son of God born with you on the earth!

It is his birthday,— his in whom our youth
Becomes immortal. Nothing good or sweet,
Or beautiful or needful to complete
The being that he shares, shall suffer blight:
All that in us his Father can delight,
He saves, he makes eternal as his truth.
Praise him for one another, loyal friends!
The friendship he awakens never ends.

It is his birthday,— and this world of ours
Is a new earth, since he hath dwelt therein;
Is even as heaven, since one life without sin
Made it a home. His voice is in the air;
His face looks forth from beauty everywhere;
His breath is sweetness as the soul of flowers;
And in him — joy beyond all joy of these —
Man wakes to glorious possibilities.

It is his birthday and our birthday, too!
Humanity was one long dream of him
Until he came: with fitful glow, and dim,

The altars heavenward smoked from vague
desire,
Despair half-stifling aspiration's fire.
He is man's lost ideal, shining through
This life of ours, whereinto floweth his;
God interblent with human destinies.

It is his birthday,— his, the only one
Who ever made life's meaning wholly plain.
Dawn is he to our night! No longer vain
And purposeless our onward struggling years:
The hope he bringeth overflows our fears.
Now do we know the Father through the Son!
O earth, O heart, be glad on this glad morn!
God is with man! Life, life — to us is born!
— *Lucy Larcom.*

CHRIST THE DIVINE WORD.

John i. 14, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth."

It is thought incredible that a Being infinite as God should reveal himself through anything so small as the person of a man, or become in any way identified with one particular created soul. And so it would be if his special presence with Christ involved his absence from any corner of the universe,— if his light were fainter in other minds for being so rich and full in Christ's, and he were less with remote worlds for being more with ours. Whoever conceives that God in person came and lived the human life, and so dwelt in the villages of Galilee and the courts of Jerusalem as to be in the least withdrawn from Thessaly and Rome, from the planets or the Pleiades, has a faith worthy of the Lycaonian peasants, who took Barnabas for Jupiter and Paul for Mercury. The Infinite cannot become finite, the Eternal retire into time, the ocean of everlasting power turn into one of its own mountain streams. But what hinders a limited nature being filled

throughout and pervaded by the unlimited, a human Soul from so absorbing the Divine Spirit as to leave no room for anything of lower grade? In excluding all but himself from the Spirit of Christ and permitting neither shade nor flaw in the clearness of his image there, God did not vacate any other medium of expression or prejudice his living agency in any portion of space or thought. No star throughout the firmament missed him the more that he so purely shone in that fair life. No sorrowing heart cried to him in vain, because the angel of consolation was watching in Gethsemane. No guilty will was left without his warning look, because he was in the desert, strengthening his holy one to triumph over temptation. It is not as though the grace and power of God were a quantity that could be used up. From not a place, not a moment, not a creature, did the divine tide ebb to make the flood that rose within the soul of Christ. Nay, were there not a sacred effluence abroad, there could be no concentration on a point. The lens which brings the sunbeams to a focus makes no darkness in the air; and a mind which gathers into it the holy rays of love and goodness, not only leaves all else bright as it was before, but shows of what a pure and brilliant essence the shadiest of visible humanities still have a share. Do you say, our nature is so small? Then it is the easier for the divine to fill it quite. It is a little thing for him, but it is for us the greatest, that a nature like our own should appear as his pure receptacle; should be simply at one with him; should harmonize what is discordant, revive what is lost, realize what is sighed for in us; and reclaim the type of being so sadly stained and marred, which is his own image here below.

Nor let it be supposed that, when the medium of divine expression is thus an individual, the thing expressed cannot be universal. On the contrary, all moral and spiritual things, all truths of the soul, differ in this from the formulas of science and doctrines of philosophy, that they are more largely conceived in concrete embodiment than in general statement; and to know the infinite depth there is, the boundless reach of application, in goodness, love and faith, it is better to look on one saintly life, or even a single act of noble living obedience, than to

whole pandects and bibles of definitions, however comprehensive, and precepts, however divine.

Those who shrink from recognizing in Christ a human impersonation of divine character often press upon us the question whether then we are to regard him as a unique being, differing not in degree only, but also in kind, from the just and wise and saintly of every age. I answer by a parable: he that always hits the mark does not differ in kind from those whom he surpasses; yet, if all others fall short of this, he is unique.

We can neither deny to faithful, heroic, and holy men, to a Socrates, a Marcus Aurelius, a Blaise Pascal, an approach to Christ upon the same line, nor claim for him any pre-eminence that removes them from his fellowship. But neither can we speak otherwise of God himself. He also, with all the infinitude of his perfections, is still but the Father of spirits, and, on the side of moral goodness, differing from his children only in degree. However vast the interval, it is one on which movement never ceases to be possible: the obedience of the little child that tells the truth, or keeps his word and suffers, is akin to the fidelity of God, who will not break his promise to the universe. In the world of character there is no such problem as that about the "origin of species." All minds that own a better and a worse are fellow-denizens of the same city of God, severed by no antipathies of race or impassable barriers of rank, but inwardly conscious of the same authority and revering the same call; knit together in love, in proportion as they draw nearer to the beauty of holiness; and lifted at last into fellowship with the Supreme Perfection.—*James Martineau.*

THE STILL HOUR.

A PSALM FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE.

A friend stands at the door,
In either tight-closed hand
Hiding rich gifts, three hundred and threescore,
Waiting to sow them daily o'er the land,
Even as the seed the sower.
Each drops he, treads it in, and passes by:
It cannot be made fruitful till it die.
O good New Year, we clasp
That warm, shut hand of thine,

Loosing forever, with half sigh, half gasp,
That which from ours falls like dead fingers'
twine.

Ay, whether fierce its grasp
Has been, or gentle, having been, we know
That it was blessed : let the Old Year go.

Yet hang some lamp-like hope
Above this unknown way,
Kind Year, to give our spirits freer scope
And our hands strength to work while it is
day.

But, if that way must slope
Tombward, oh, bring before our fading eyes
The lamp of life, the hope that never dies !

Comfort our souls with love,—
Love of all human kind ;
Love special, close, in which like sheltered dove
Each weary heart its own safe nest may find ;
And love that turns above
Adoringly, contented to resign
All loves, if need be, for the Love Divine.

Friend, come thou like a friend,
And whether bright thy face,
Or dim with clouds we cannot comprehend,
We'll hold out patient hands, each in his place,
And trust thee to the end,
Knowing thou ledest onward to those spheres
Where there are neither days nor months nor
years.

—Dinah Mulock Craik.

THE LAST NIGHT OF THE YEAR.

Matt. xxv. 6 : "And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh ; go ye out to meet him."

The cry is heard to-night : it has been heard again and again this year by many. It comes in the depths of our darkness : at midnight it is heard, waking us as men are wakened by an earthquake.

"At midnight !" It is a word of comfort to some. When all is darkest and the sleep of sorrow and pain is heaviest, when our gloom is deepest, our doubt most torturing, our heart most torn with care, when our ship of life is most tossed in starless night by the tempest of life, then look up and lift up your heads ; for your redemption draweth nigh. When the pain is sorest, the child is born : when life is at its worst, the deliverer comes.

The great light that we shall see lingers long. But it lingers that we may be wrought into inward power. All the Christian graces are made strong by patience. Perfect peace is only won by long waiting on the Lord.

By untiring faith, which believes even when hope has veiled its eyes ; by unwearied love, which labors for man even when we seem most forgotten by God, which clings to God in the midst of the deepest darkness and the keenest pain ; by resignation which watches with gentleness through the awful hours of life,—are we trained to full enjoyment, full assurance.

Passive endurance, active perseverance,—these are the two sides of the shield of Christian watchfulness. And, when the work of all these is done on the soul, then, and not till then, the bridegroom comes.

It is a word of warning to others. The midnight round us may be a midnight of our own making, the darkness of sin and crime, the starless night of selfishness and carelessness. There we dwell, saying to ourselves : "Tush ! God does not see me, the Highest does not remember ; I am safe from his judgment." Fool ! how knowest thou this night that thy soul shall not be required of thee ? If not now, the time will come. The dazzling light of judgment, the revelation of the righteousness of God, will rend asunder the darkness in which we lie. We shall know that God sees us, we shall shrink back in fear and horror from the vision of ourself disclosed in the glare of condemnation. The midnight round us shall be as fire, a blaze of holiness revealed to cowering and shamed sin. That which we sow we shall reap. Our sin will find us out when the cry comes, "behold, the bridegroom cometh ; go ye forth to meet him."

Are we ready for these things, our lamps alit, our loins girded, and we ourselves as those who watch for their Lord, lest, coming suddenly, he find us sleeping ? We ask this question on this last night of the year. For on such a night as this, when, in the silence in which we pray, we desire to give ourselves, body and soul and spirit, into the hands of God, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto him, we hear, coming out of the caverns of the dying year, its last dim, solemn voice to us,— "Behold, the bridegroom cometh ; go ye forth to meet him."

Are we ready or unready ? If God should come to us in sorrow or insistent duty or desperate trial, or in the overwhelming of joy, or in disease, or in death, shall we be prepared to meet him with tended lamps ?

Readiness or unreadiness,—these are the two deciding things which settle judgment, to which the parable speaks home.

There is a solemn choice in life. Life and death, light and darkness, truth and lies, are set before us. At every instant the cry comes for us to choose one or the other, and the choice of one involves the putting aside of the other. And we must choose. That is one of the certainties of life. There is no such thing as offering one hand to God and another to evil,—one hand to the self-sacrifice of Christ, another hand to the covetousness of the world. You cannot serve God and Mammon. You cannot follow Jesus at home and your own pleasure in your outward life. Your life, whether you like it or not, becomes of one piece.

There is no border land, no debatable strip of country, between the broad and narrow way. You think you can waver, halt between two opinions; but, every day you balance God against what is wrong, you are weakening the power of choosing right and giving strength to the baser self within you, and you will end by choosing evil for life. And thereof in the end comes judgment, unrelenting, sudden lightning in one moment from one end of heaven to another, a cry in the street,—“Behold, the bridegroom is here!” And all is over for this life.

Make your choice. Choose the fatherhood of God; choose to be his child; choose goodness, truth, love, purity, mercy, faith, and hope; choose the life of Christ on earth; choose the peace and joy of the spirit of your God. Then blest indeed will be the last hours of this year. The old time we loved, in which we knew and loved so much, suffered and rejoiced, learnt and unlearnt so many things, is dying in the night. Let us spend our last hours in lighting our lamps, that we may go forth to meet our Master with wakeful eyes and ready hands in the coming year, to work with him for the redemption of mankind. Let all the past die with it. Bury its evil deep: hide it in the grave with Christ, and go in resurrection power to meet him in Galilee. We may claim forgiveness if we are resolute to do the evil thing no more. We may claim the power to work if we are determined to drift and idle no more. We may claim God’s good will in our hearts as ours if we will lay aside the doing of our own wrong will.

These are mighty and glorious claims; but we have, I thank God, the right to make them upon our Father. So joyfully begin, and, when you hear the bells to-night, be happy. They will ring out the false and ring in the true for you; ring out all evil lords within your soul, and ring in the true Master,—Jesus Christ our Lord.—*Stopford A. Brooke.*

THE BIBLE CLASS.

PHARISEES, SADDUCEES, AND ESSENES.

The Pharisees.

The prominence given to the Law by its expounders in the schools and synagogues helped greatly to keep the people faithful to it. But some were more faithful to it than others, observed it more strictly, and embraced its leading principles with more ardor. Such men were naturally noticed by their neighbors. The care they took in avoiding pollution and keeping away from everything heathen could not be altogether hidden. First it was said of one, and then of another, “How pious he is!” By degrees this epithet came to be attached to all who took special pains to make their life conform to the demands of the Law, and there was a recognized class who went by the name of “the pious.” They did not differ from other people in their belief, they held the same doctrines, they obeyed the same ordinances; but they cared much more for their religion, and the only way they had of showing this was by a more rigid fulfilment of the Law.

The great struggle of freedom for religion in the middle of the second century B.C., led by the Maccabees, was largely maintained by these determined men, who readily sacrificed themselves and their families sooner than be false to their faith. The triumph of the Jews against their Syrian oppressors seemed for a time to secure an uninterrupted field for the principles represented by the Pious. But after a time the effect began to wear off. Earnestness declined, and many who had at first been zealous grew indifferent and neglectful. Greek influences gained in power, and dangerous tendencies to worldliness threatened the purity of religious observance. The people were often not in a condition to pay

proper attention to the distinctions of clean and unclean. During the disturbances many legal duties had been neglected, even by priests and Levites; and the masses had certainly failed to comply with the full requirements of the Law. This was especially the case in the matter of some of the proper religious taxes on the products of the land. Inquiry was made whether the tithes ordained in the Law for the priests, the Levites, and the poor, had been duly paid. This was not a mere financial arrangement for raising so much money: it was a religious duty. Part of the tax was supposed to be paid to the real owner of the whole land, God. As such, it was holy, and could not be lawfully enjoyed by a layman not belonging to the sacred caste. Any one who partook of food on which the proper tithe had not been paid was really guilty, therefore, of eating something which ought to have been given to God.

How was this difficulty to be avoided? Some did not mind: they were willing to run the risk. Others resolved that they would only buy food from dealers who could be trusted to have paid the proper tithe. This led to the formation of guilds or brotherhoods of persons who pledged themselves to the strict discharge of this particular religious duty. The members of these guilds bought and sold among themselves, and so kept aloof from the rest of their neighbors. They would not take a meal at any one's else house, because they might unknowingly eat of some untithed food. Thus they came to be known as the people who had separated themselves from the community, and this grew into a name. They were called the *Perushim*, or Pharisees; *i.e.*, the Separatists.

The strictness displayed in one direction naturally spread to others. . . . First one was more precise than the rest of his comrades in the fraternity, then another followed him. By and by a third was discontented because these, even, were not precise enough; and so he aimed at still greater austerity. Thus there grew up various grades among the fraternities, representing successive stages in the endeavor to carry out to the utmost the supposed requirements of the Law. Entrance into the brotherhood was open to all. The candidate for admission declared himself ready to fulfil all relig-

ious demands, and took a vow before three members of the guild to keep the rules of the community faithfully. A period of probation preceded his reception into the several grades, lasting from thirty days to a year; and special instruction was imparted to him, in explanation of his new duties.

The fraternities of the Pharisees thus formed, plainly stood in close relation with the rabbis. They were simply the further development of the principles of the schools: they attempted to give actual form in real life to the ideal demands of the teachers who spent all their energy on the study of the Law and the determination of right conduct in all kinds of possible or impossible cases. But these brotherhoods, though they were formed out of the people, were not in opposition to the people. On the other hand, they were open to all; they claimed no privileges, they only imposed obligations; they took nothing from the people, they simply set before them a pattern of performances of duties which, in theory at least, every one recognized as binding on himself. The people had no objection to seeing others more pious, more devoted, more self-sacrificing than themselves. On the contrary, they admired them for it, especially as the devotion of the Pharisees to the Law which was the bond of Israel's nationality made them the most zealous patriots. The Pharisees, in short, embodied, as far as they could, the fundamental notions of Israel's holiness, and so became peculiarly the national party.

Sadducees.

It can be readily understood that the impulse represented by the Pharisees could not always work unchecked; and the check came from a source from which we might not have expected it at first,—*viz.*, the priestly families. The piety of the Pharisees was largely independent of the temple and its services. It did not in any way spring from the ritual: it dealt with a number of questions which had little or no concern with the public institutions and organization of religion. Hence it tended to throw the priesthood farther into the shade: at least, it did not in any way promote their interests. Sometimes, indeed, some priest joined a fraternity of the Pharisees; but, in

general, the leaders of the priesthood, who jealously maintained hereditary privileges which counted for little beside the personal ascendancy acquired by the extraordinarily devout, stood in distinct rivalry with them. These priestly families made up the party of the Sadducees, whose exact origin is not known. They were wealthy, and they had power in Jerusalem. That power they were not ashamed to maintain, sometimes by unworthy concessions to their foreign rulers. They stood for the temple, the priesthood, and official piety; while the Pharisees stood for the synagogue, the school, the teacher, and personal piety. Neither party could properly be called a sect. Both had the same standard of faith, yet their religious ideas differed widely.

The first great difference related to the value of the traditional maxims which had gradually come to be regarded as of such immense importance in the schools. The teachers gained such weight, the authority of their continuous succession was so powerful, that the body of Scribe-made Law was really something new. It was supposed that it must have been communicated to Moses himself, and handed on by him to the elders, and so on through generation after generation. The Pharisees were on the side of the rabbis and the schools. But the Sadducees would have nothing but the letter of the Scripture. Hence they rejected the great mass of supplementary precepts which the teachers had accumulated, and with this they also rejected many important modifications calculated to bring the written Law into more complete harmony with the spirit of a later time. Thus the written Law, founded on the primitive usages of the rude tribes of the desert, laid down the principle of retaliation for personal injuries, "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." The Pharisees were for interpreting this symbolically, and substituting a money compensation. The Sadducees insisted on its literal execution. When the Pharisees were taking all sorts of trouble about the minute compliance with the requirements for ceremonial cleanliness elaborated in the schools, the Sadducees only laughed; there was nothing about that in the Law. The Pharisees wanted to have the golden lamp-stand in the sanctuary cleansed after a great feast in

case it should have received any accidental defilement. The Sadducees refused, with the sarcastic remark, "Why, they will be wanting to cleanse the sun next."

The same unwillingness to receive anything in addition to the actual words of Scripture determined the attitude of the Sadducees to the belief in a future life, which was warmly embraced by the Pharisees. The doctrine of another state of rewards and punishments after death played a great part in the teachings of the Pharisees. But it was not mentioned in the written Law, and so the Sadducees would have none of it. It did not really gain a place among the ideas of the Jews until after the captivity, and was in part due, perhaps, to the influence of Persian belief. But it had now been established a long time in Jewish thought, and formed a regular part of the traditions of the teachers. So it was supposed, like the rest of the oral law, to have really come from Moses, and to have been in existence all along. We can tell, however, from the language of some of the prophets about the state of the dead in the underworld, that they knew nothing of it. This is the way in which Josephus (who was himself of a noble priestly family, and as a young man had made trial of both Pharisees and Sadducees) describes it: "The Pharisees also believe that souls have an immortal vigor in them, and that under the earth there will be rewards or punishments, according as they have practised virtue or evil doing in this life, and that the latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison, but that the former shall have power to revive and live again. On account of these doctrines they have immense influence with the masses of the people, and whatsoever is done about divine worship, prayers, and sacrifices, they do according to the directions of the Pharisees; insomuch that the cities gave great attestations to them on account of their entire virtuous conduct, both in the actions of their lives and their discourses also. But the doctrine of the Sadducees makes the soul die with the body." This passage of Josephus shows us that the general teaching of the Pharisees was much more acceptable to the people than that of the Sadducees. And it was particularly so in connection with this doctrine of the life to come, and the associ-

ated belief in the "kingdom of heaven" derived from the oracles of the prophets.

The Sadducees maintained that the fulfilment of the hopes uttered by the prophets was not really to be expected as a positive certainty. If men are free to choose, they argued, and can do one thing or abstain from doing another thing according as they like, how could any one foretell what was going to happen? Man had been made at the beginning by God, and then set to do as best he could. God had provided him certain religious help in the Law: let him obey this, and he would be happy and prosperous here; but let him not think there was anything more to come. "No," said the Pharisee, "God has not left man to himself: he is always working with man; he guides his actions to certain ends; and he will punish the wicked and recompense the righteous." The Sadducees, rich and comfortable in Jerusalem, on good terms with Herod or the Romans, did not care so much for the coming of that "kingdom" for which so many were longing and toiling and praying. They did not feel the bitterness of oppression; they were not anxious for a change which would make short work of their particular privileges; and they had not that passionate, burning faith which could never be content while the people of God were mixed with idolaters and subject to heathen rule. So they did not share the great national aspirations; though Josephus significantly tells us that, when they came into office, "they had to conform to the notions of the Pharisees, because otherwise the multitude would not endure them."

Thus, on the whole, the Pharisees with all their extravagances stood much nearer to the real life of the people. While the Sadducees remained at Jerusalem, the former were scattered through the country, mingling in popular movements and knowing what was going on everywhere. They were not a very large body in number. Josephus reckons them at about six thousand in the days of Herod.

We may be sure from the language of Jesus in the Gospels that he has really much more sympathy with their way of thinking on many subjects than he had with the Sadducees, and that he was all the more grieved, therefore, to see among them so much self-righteousness and public display of piety.

The teachers and the Pharisees were, in fact, the forward party in Jewish religion. They were the real promoters of religious progress. Their ideal was that all the people should know and practise the law; and they endeavored so to interpret it as to enable it to take up into itself new ideas, which the liberal meaning did not always seem to justify. Their doctrine of a Mosaic tradition, independent of the Scripture, provided them with the means of accommodating fresh beliefs into their religious scheme without breaking continuity with the past. So, in one sense, they were the liberals of Judaism, and unquestionably prepared the way for some of the teachings of Jesus. On the other hand, it was from them that he met the most determined opposition; and it was by their help that he was brought to death. There is this, at least, to be said for them,—and it is more than can be said for all persecutors: the fate which they inflicted on him they were ready to endure themselves. The tenacity with which the Jews have maintained their religion through such terrible sufferings is largely due to the heroic courage with which again and again rabbi and Pharisee laid down their lives in martyrdom.—*From "Life in Palestine when Jesus lived," by J. Estlin Carpenter.*

(*"The Essenes" next month.*)

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[Send all matter for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.]

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For Young Children.

Cheerful Hours; *Our Little Men and Women*; "Tick Tock Stories"; "Dolly's Ride"; "Queerie Queers with Hands, Wings, and Claws."

Offered by the King's Chapel Branch of the Cheerful Letter Exchange. Apply to Miss Dorothy Amory, 278 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.: "The Christian Year," poetry; "Tales of Ancient Greece," Cox; "Laws of Life after Mind of Christ," sermons by J. H. Thom; "Mozart's 12th Mass"; "Hymns for First Church"; "The Deserted Village," Goldsmith; "History of Greece"; Rénan's "Life of Jesus"; "Daily Strength for Daily Needs"; "National Cook Book"; "Helps to Devout Living"; "Midsummer-Night's Dream" (illustrated); "The Barefooted Maiden," translated from the German; "Christian Consolation," Peabody; "Stories," by Miss Sedgwick; "The Amulet"; "Lectures on Preaching," "Baccalaureate Sermons," Phillips Brooks; "Sermons on the New Life," Bushnell; "Lessons from the Epistles"; "Madame de Beaupré," by Mrs. Jenkin; "Footsteps of Saint Paul," "Endeavors after the Christian Life," sermons, Martineau; New Testament; "Hymns of the Church Universal"; Hymn and Tune Book; "Fireside Travels," Lowell; The Paragraph Bible; "Elements of Moral Science," Wayland; "The United States of America," Mackenzie; "Art of Painting"; "Life and Works of Masters"; "Christian Policy of Life," Brown; "The Story of Religion in England for Young Folks"; "Legend of Thomas Didymus, or Life and Times of Jesus," James Freeman Clarke; "The Bow in the Cloud," Briggs; Mrs. Putnam's "New Receipt Book"; "The Manliness of Christ," Hughes; "The Device Tragedy," Longfellow; "The Divinity of Christ."

REQUESTS.

[Read directions at beginning of Book Club before writing.]

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by

noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club secretary.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

Miss Belle Allen, Athens, Texas, is interested in the Mental Science movement, and asks that reading on that subject be sent her.

Mrs. Millie Presler, of Polkton, North Carolina, desires Maury's "Geography" and Harrington's "Speller" for her children. She is a very poor woman, with nine children, unable to buy books, but trying to give them what education she can with her limited means.

I would like some good magazines, books for very small children, and some of the best fiction,—in fact, anything you may have will prove very acceptable. Have recently moved from Long Beach, Mississippi, to Virginia, my former home, and am now living in the country, where I have no opportunity of getting reading matter, as I cannot afford to buy it, as we have been to great expense, having to leave Mississippi on account of ill-health. I am very fond of reading, and have a bright little girl who would enjoy little picture books. If books are sent by mail, send to Patterson, Wythe County, Virginia. Will pass on any reading matter. Mrs. Joseph T. Wright.

Through *The Cheerful Letter* I wish to thank all who kindly remembered me with reading the past year. I will be so grateful for a few novels and magazines this winter. My health is somewhat improved, but I am far from being well, and during winter am confined to the house, and mostly alone. Most sincerely, (Miss) Kate A. Wirick, Lloyd, Jefferson County, Florida.

Mrs. S. C. Duke, Polkton, North Carolina, is anxious to receive for her four little children Harrington's "Graded Spelling Books," "Second Readers," "Third Reader,"

"First and Second Arithmetic," and "Primer."

To the kind Cheerful Club: I would be pleased to receive any literature, especially a fashion magazine or *Munsey's Magazine*. We used to get a good many papers and magazines from the Cheerful Letter Club two years ago, when we lived in Texas; but we don't get so many now, yet we need them more here than we did in Texas. Miss Laura Wilson, Stella, Oklahoma.

Mrs. W. C. Burton, Ryan, Indian Territory, asks for the "Story of my Life," by Mary A. Livermore, or any other reading. There are many in the neighborhood who have no other reading except that passed on to them by Mrs. Burton.

Master Walter Lester, Charity, Patrick County, Virginia, eleven years of age, wishes Johnson's "Fourth Reader," Webster's "Dictionary," and an "Arithmetic."

Mrs. Laura Henderson, Chelsea, Indian Territory, asks for reading for herself and story-books for the children.

Mary A. Meserve, Jackson, New Hampshire, wishes Worcester's "Ancient and Modern History."

Miss Lucy H. Amos, Heareford, North Carolina, a girl of seventeen, asks for reading and school-books for herself and two younger sisters, thirteen and nine. They live nine miles from a railroad, and are not able to buy the necessary books for school use.

Somehow, I feel like turning to the Book Club friends to-day for sympathy in my great bereavement. Three weeks ago to-day we buried my dear husband. He was sick only two weeks, with typhoid fever. I can scarcely realize yet that he is gone whence none return. I am well satisfied with his future; but my concern is for myself and children, that we may live so that some time we may go to him. I do feel sometimes that my task is indeed more than I am able to bear; but His promise is to help the widow and the fatherless. I am left to take care of four little ones. The eldest is not yet ten years old. I am thankful to say that my own health is much better than a year ago. I dread the long winter evenings, and would be very glad to receive reading. Mrs. Senie Murphy, Chester Hill, Ohio.

Mrs. Carrie M. Dana, 2409 E Street, San Diego, California, writes: "I feel very grateful to those kind friends who sent books last winter. I tried to write and thank each and every one; for the reading proved a blessing to us, and to others also. My husband is a helpless invalid, and I read aloud to him evenings. We have seven children that are also fond of reading. Would be particularly pleased to receive 'Wide Wide World,' 'Queechy,' 'From Jest to Earnest,' or any magazine for 1898 or 1899."

Mrs. Hattie D. Wood, formerly of Durwood, Indian Territory, has moved to Sulphur Springs, Indian Territory.

The address of Mattie Alger, formerly Melrose, Idaho, is now Isabel, Lane County, Oregon.

NATURAL HISTORY.

IN WINTER QUARTERS.

When you are sitting safe and comfortable, by the open fire, does it occur to you to wonder what has become of all the numerous little creatures — birds, beasts, reptiles, and insects — that were so active and happy during the warm summer weather? Do you see any of them about, in the woods and fields?

Most of the birds take advantage of the pleasant means of travelling which their wings afford them, and seek a warmer climate; but some of them kindly stay with us all winter. Ernest Ingersoll, in his charming little book, "Friends Worth Knowing," says that in January, in the near neighborhood of New York, over fifty species of birds appear with more or less regularity. They comprise two classes,—those which remain the year round and those which come down to escape the severity of a northern winter, which even their arctic-bred, hardy constitutions are unable to endure.

As for other animals, you have probably read that one way in which they are enabled to escape the effects of the cold of winter is by passing into a state of torpidity. In quadrupeds the position is the same as in ordinary sleep, the body being rolled into a ball, with the head, legs, and tail gathered together, so as best to preserve the animal heat. Before passing into this condition,

the animal selects some safe retreat, burrow, cave, hollow tree, or nest of dry leaves. Some animals accumulate a stock of food before hibernating, and rouse up on warm days to partake of it. If the temperature falls below a certain point, the animal, instead of becoming still more profoundly asleep, is awakened. This is supposed to be a provision to enable it to take measures to escape the effects of a too severe cold. It is only quadrupeds with claws which hibernate; those with hoofs do not.

The Encyclopedia Britannica says that all animals belonging to the amphibians and reptiles hibernate in cold or temperate climates. Land turtles bury themselves in the ground, and fresh water ones in the banks or at the bottom of lakes and rivers. Lizards and snakes retire to holes in trees, under stones, or among dead leaves, where many species congregate in large numbers, and pass the winter closely entwined. Frogs generally hibernate in masses in mud at the bottom of the water.

Hibernation has been observed in some fishes of the temperate zones. They do not become torpid, but their vital functions are simply lowered; and they hide in holes, not going abroad in search of food.

Fresh-water mollusks are also said to bury themselves in the mud at the bottom of ponds and rivers, and the land snails hide themselves in or beneath moss or dead leaves. Snails further protect themselves by putting on double windows, as it were:—

"At the first hint of frost, our snail feels the approach of a resistless lassitude, and, creeping under some mouldering log or half-buried boulder, it attaches itself, aperture upward, by exuding a little glue, and settles itself for a season of hibernating sleep. Withdrawing into the shell, the animal throws across the aperture a film of slimy mucus, which hardens as tight as a miniature drum-head. As the weather becomes colder, the creature draws itself a little farther in, and makes another 'epiphragm,' and so on until often five or six protect the animal sleeping snugly coiled in the deepest recesses of his domicile."—*Friends Worth Knowing*.

Earth-worms are said to pass the winter, either singly or rolled up with others into a ball, at the bottom of their burrows.

And what becomes of our insect friends?

Some of them die at the approach of winter, but Dr. Packard tells us that at no time of the year need the entomologist rest from his labors. In winter under the bark of trees or in moss he can find many species.

Some of the inhabitants of fresh water—caddis-worms, beetles, water-bugs, small crustacea, and other little animals—may be found alive and active under the ice in mid-winter.

An animal which in one locality may remain torpid in the winter, farther south may be active. So you see that it will be quite worth your while to notice what goes on about you in winter. No book can tell you just what it will be, and perhaps no one else has precisely your opportunity for observation.—*Cora H. Clarke.*

GRASSHOPPERS IN WINTER.

Grasshoppers during the winter remain hidden among the grass and leaves in sunny and sheltered spots; and in such places, on any mild day in winter, when the ground is free from snow, they may be found warmed into activity and hopping about in quite a lively manner. R. H.

Little wood-mice sometimes take up their winter quarters in old deserted birds' nests. I once found in a thicket of high blueberry bushes one which mousie had roofed and lined with thick soft moss. He was usually at home; but, whenever any one approached his dwelling with intent to call, he would very quietly slip out, and, dropping to the ground, would instantly disappear in the bushes. R. H.

An English gentleman living at Kingston on the Thames had a kitchen built on the banks of the river; and his servants made a pet of a frog which had his hole in the skirting, and this frog came out of his hole every evening for three successive winters to bask before the fire.

MARY CARPENTER.

FROM THE LIFE OF FRANCES POWER COBBE.

My first interview with Miss Carpenter (November, 1858) was in the doorway of my bedroom after my arrival at Red Lodge House, a small house in the same street as Red Lodge. She had been absent from home on business, and hastened upstairs to

welcome me. It was rather a critical moment, for I had been asking myself anxiously, "What manner of woman shall I behold?" I knew I should see an able and an excellent person; but it is quite possible for able and excellent women to be far from agreeable companions for a tête-à-tête of years, and nothing short of this had I in contemplation. The first glimpse in that doorway set my fears at rest! The plain and careworn face, the figure which, Dr. Martineau says, had been "columnar" in youth, but which at fifty-two was angular and stooping, were yet all alive with feeling and power. Her large, light blue eyes, with their peculiar trick of showing the white beneath the iris, had an extraordinary faculty of taking possession of the person on whom they were fixed, like those of an amiable Ancient Mariner who only wanted to talk philanthropy, and not to tell stories of weird voyages and murdered albatrosses. There was humor also in every line of her face, and a readiness to catch the first gleam of a joke. But the prevailing characteristic of Mary Carpenter, as I came subsequently more perfectly to recognize, was a high and strong resolution, which made her whole path much like that of a plough in a well-drawn furrow, which goes straight on its own beneficent way, and gently pushes aside into little ridges all intervening people and things.

Long after this first interview, Miss Elliot showed Miss Carpenter's photograph to the Master of Balliol, without telling him whom it represented. After looking at it carefully, he remarked, "This is the portrait of a person who lives *under high moral excitement.*" There could not be a truer summary of her habitual state.

Our days were very much alike, and "Sunday shone no Sabbath-day" for us. Our little household consisted of one honest girl (a certain excellent Marianne, whom I often see now, in her respectable widowhood, and who well deserves commemoration) and two little convicted thieves from the Red Lodge. We assembled for prayers very early in the morning; and breakfast, during the winter months, was got over before daylight, Miss Carpenter always remarking brightly, as she sat down, "how cheerful!" was the gas. After this there were classes at the different schools, endless arrangements and organiza-

tions, the looking up of little truants from the Ragged Schools, and a good deal of business in the way of writing reports and so on. Altogether nearly every hour of the day and week was pretty well mapped out, leaving only space for the brief dinner and tea; and at nine or ten o'clock at night, when we met at last, Miss Carpenter was so exhausted, that I have seen her fall asleep with the spoon half-way between her mouth and the cup of gruel which she ate for supper. Her habits were all of the simplest and most self-denying kind. Both by temperament and on principle she was essentially a Stoic. She had no sympathy at all with asceticism (which is a very different thing, and implies vivid sense of the attractiveness of luxury), and she strongly condemned fasting and all such practices, on the Zoroastrian principle that they involve a culpable weakening of powers which are intrusted to us for good use. But she was an ingrained Stoic, to whom all the minor comforts of life are simply indifferent, and who can scarcely even recognize the fact that other people take heed of them. She once, with great simplicity, made to me the grave observation that at a country house where she had just passed two or three days "the ladies and gentlemen all came down dressed for dinner, and evidently thought the meal rather a pleasant part of the day!" For herself (as I often told her) she had no idea of any feast, except that of the Passover, and always ate with her loins girded and her umbrella at hand, ready to rush off to the Red Lodge, if not to the Red Sea. In vain I remonstrated on the unwholesomeness of the practice, and entreated on my own behalf to be allowed time to swallow my food, and also some food (in the shape of vegetables) to swallow, as well as the perpetual, too easily ordered salt beef and ham. Next day, after an appeal of this kind (made serious on my part by threats of gout) good Miss Carpenter greeted me with a complacent smile on my entry into our little dining-room. "You see I have not forgotten your wish for a dish of vegetables!" There, surely enough, on a cheese-plate stood six little round radishes!

Her special chair was a horsehair one with wooden arms; and on the seat she had placed a small square cushion, as hard as a board, likewise covered with horsehair. I

took this up one day, and taunted her with the Sybaritism it betrayed; but she replied, with infinite simplicity: "Yes, indeed! I am sorry to say that since my illness I have been obliged to have recourse to these indulgences (!). I used to try, like Saint Paul, to 'endure hardness.'"

Her standard of conscientious rigor was even, it would appear, applicable to animals. I never saw a more ludicrous little scene than when she one day found my poor dog Hajjin, a splendid gray Pomeranian, lying on the broad of her very broad back, luxuriating on the rug before a good fire. After gravely inspecting her for some moments, Miss Carpenter turned solemnly away observing, in a tone of deep moral disapprobation, "Self-indulgent dog!"

Much of our work lay in a certain Ragged School in a filthy lane named St. James' Back, now happily swept from the face of the earth. The long line of Lewin's Mead beyond the chapel was bad enough, especially at nine or ten o'clock of a winter's night, when half the gas-lamps were extinguished, and groups of drunken men and miserable women were to be found shouting, screaming, and fighting before the dens of drink and infamy of which the street consisted. Miss Carpenter told me that a short time previously some Bow Street constables had been sent down to this place, to ferret out a crime which had been committed there, and that they reported there was not in all London such a nest of wickedness as they had explored. The ordinary Bristol policemen were never to be seen at night in Lewin's Mead, and it was said they were afraid to show themselves in the place. But St. James' Back was, I think, a shade lower than Lewin's Mead. At all events, it was further from the upper air of decent life; and in these horrid slums that dauntless woman had bought some tumble-down old buildings, and turned them into schools,—day-schools for girls and night-schools for boys, all the very sweepings of those wretched streets.

It was a wonderful spectacle to see Mary Carpenter sitting patiently before the large school-gallery in this place, teaching, singing, and praying with the wild street boys, in spite of endless interruptions caused by such proceedings as shooting marbles into hats on the table behind her,

whistling, stamping, fighting, shrieking out "Amen" in the middle of the prayer, and sometimes rising *en masse* and tearing like a troop of bison, in hob-nailed shoes, down from the gallery, round the great school-room, and down the stairs, out into the street. These irrepressible outbreaks she bore with infinite good humor; and, what seemed to be more marvellous still, she heeded, apparently, not at all, the indescribable abominations of the odors of a tripe-and-trotter shop next door, wherein operations were frequently carried on which, together with the *bouquet du peuple* of the poor little unkempt scholars, rendered the school of a hot summer's evening little better than the ill-smelling circle of Dante's Inferno. These trifles, however, scarcely even attracted Mary Carpenter's attention, fixed as it was on the possibility of "taking hold" (as she used to say) of one little urchin or another, on whom for the moment her hopes were fixed.

The droll things which daily occurred in these schools, and the wonderful replies received from the scholars to questions testing their information, amused her intensely; and the more unruly were the young scamps the more, I think, in her secret heart, she liked them, and glorified in taming them. She used to say, "Only to get them to use the school comb is something!" There was the boy who defined Conscience to me as "a thing a gen'elman hasn't got, who, when a boy finds his purse and gives it back to him, doesn't give the boy sixpence." There was the boy who, sharing in my Sunday evening lecture on "Thankfulness,"—wherein I had pointed out the grass and blossoming trees on the Downs as subjects for praise,—was interrogated as to which pleasure he enjoyed most in the course of the year, and replied candidly: "Cock-fightin', ma'am. There's a pit up by the 'Black Boy' as is worth anythink in Brissel!"

The clergy troubled us little. One day an impressive young curate entered, and sat silent, sternly critical, to note what heresies were being instilled into the minds of his flock. "I am giving a lesson on Palestine," I said. "I have just been at Jerusalem." "In what sense?" said the awful young man, darkly discerning some mysticism (of the Swedenborgian kind, perhaps) behind the simple statement. The boys who were

dismissed from the school for obstreperous behavior were a great difficulty to us, usually employing themselves in shouting and hammering at the door. One winter's night, when it was raining heavily, as I was passing through Lewin's Mead, I was greeted by a chorus of voices, "Cob-web, Cob-web!" emanating from the depths of a black archway. Standing still under my umbrella, and looking down the cavern, I remarked, "Don't you think I must be a little tougher than a cobweb to come out such a night as this to teach such little scamps as you?"

"Indeed, you is, mum, that's true! And stouter, too!"

"Well, don't you think you would be more comfortable in that nice, warm school-room than in this dark, cold place?"

"Yes'm, we would."

"You'll have to promise to be tremendously good, I can tell you, if I bring you in again. Will you promise?"

Vows of everlasting order and obedience were tendered; and, to Miss Carpenter's intense amusement, I came into St. James's Back, followed by a whole troop of little outlaws reduced to temporary subjection. At all events, they never shouted "Cob-web" again. Indeed, at all times the events of the day's work, if they bordered on the ludicrous (as was often the case), provoked her laughter till the tears ran down her cheeks. One night she sat grieving over a piece of ingratitude on the part of one of her teachers, and told me she had given him some invitation for the purpose of conciliating him, and "heaping coals of fire on his head." "It will take another scuttle, my dear friend," I remarked; and thereupon her tears stopped, and she burst into a hearty fit of laughter. Next evening she said to me, dolorously "I tried that other scuttle, but it was no go!"

Of course, like every mortal, Mary Carpenter had the defects of her qualities. Her absorption in her work always blinded her to the fact that other people might possibly be bored by hearing of it incessantly.

In India, I have been told that a Governor of Madras observed, after her visit: "It is very astonishing. I listened to all Miss Carpenter had to tell me; but, when I began to tell *her* what I knew of this country, she dropped asleep." Indeed, the poor wearied

and overworked brain, when it had made its effort, generally *collapsed*; and in two or three minutes, after "holding you with her eye" through a long philanthropic history, Miss Carpenter might be seen to be, to all intents and purposes, asleep.

On one occasion that most lovable old man, Samuel J. May, of Syracuse, came to pass two or three days at Red Lodge house; and Miss Carpenter was naturally delighted to take him about and show him her schools, and explain everything to him. Mr. May listened with great interest for a time, but at last his attention flagged; and two or three times he turned to me: "When can we have our talk which Theodore Parker promised me?" "Oh, by and by," Miss Carpenter always interposed; till one day, after we had visited St. James' Back, we arrived all three at the foot of the tremendous stairs, almost like those of the Trinità, which then existed in Bristol, and were called the "Christmas Steps." "Now, Mr. May and Miss Cobbe" (said Mary Carpenter, cheerfully), "you can have your talk." And so we had—till we got to the top, when she resumed the guidance of the conversation. Good jokes were often made of this little weakness, but it had its pathetic side. Never was there a word of real egotism in her eager talk, or the evidence of the slightest wish to magnify her own doings, or to impress her hearers with her immense share in the public benefits she described. It was her deep conviction that to turn one of these poor sinners from the errors of his ways, to reach to the roots of the misery and corruption of the "perishing and dangerous classes," was the most important work which could possibly be undertaken; and she very naturally, in consequence, made it the most prominent, indeed almost the sole, subject of discourse. I was once in her company at Aubrey House, in London, when there happened to be present half a dozen people, each one devoted to some special political, religious, or moral agitation. Miss Carpenter remarked in a pause in the conversation: "It is a thousand pities that everybody will not join, and give the whole of their minds to the great cause of the age, because, if they would, we should carry it undoubtedly." "What is the great cause of the age?" we simultaneously exclaimed. "Parliamentary Reform?" said our

host, Mr. Peter Taylor; "The abolition of Slavery?" said Miss Remond, a negress, Mrs. Taylor's companion; "Teetotalism?" said another; "Woman Suffrage?" said another; "The conversion of the world to Theism?" said I. In the midst of the clamor, Miss Carpenter looked serenely round. "Why, the Industrial Schools Bill, *of course!*" Nobody enjoyed the joke, when we all began to laugh, more than the reformer herself.

(To be continued next month.)

AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Please send all material for this department to Miss E. D. Chapman, 34 Buckingham Street, Cambridge, Mass.]

A jolly game for a small company of people is played in this way. Let one member give the name of a city. She then immediately begins to count. Before she reaches ten, some one else must name a city, beginning with the last letter of the word given before. Take, for example, Washington, the next city must begin with N, Newport; T, Trenton; N, New York, etc. If, unable to think of a word in the given time, that person is dropped from the game, and the next one in order has her turn. At the end the victorious person is left alone in her glory.

Mangled verses.

Insert vowels in the following lines, where the dashes are placed, and form two verses of a poem by Christina Rossetti.

L-v c-m d-w-n -t Chr-stm-s,

L-v -ll l-v-l, l-v d-v-n;

L-v -w-s b-r-n -t Chr-stm-s,

St-r -nd -ng-ls g-v -th- s-gn.

L-v -sh-ll b- -r -t-k-n,

L-v -b- - - -rs -nd l-v -b- m-n-;

L-v -t- G-d -nd -ll m-n,

L-v -th- -n-v-rs-l s-gn.

Find twenty-five articles on the face of a penny.

1. What reminds us of eternity?
2. What goes before a regiment?
3. What does an Indian wear?
4. What reminds you of matrimony?
5. What is peculiar to America?
6. What should a soldier present to a foe?
7. What should a rogue possess?

8. What does a prisoner long for?
9. What is important to legislative bodies?
10. What is part of a trunk?
11. What part of a hill?
12. What part of a shock of corn?
13. What flowers?
14. What fruit?
15. What animal?
16. What part of a river?
17. What part of Boston?
18. What silver coin?
19. What place of worship?
20. What part of a family?
21. What number and kind of buildings?
22. What part of armor?
23. What represents youth and old age?
24. What weapon?
25. A messenger?

Answers to Puzzles in November Number.

An Interview with the Statue of Liberty.

1. Statue (Is that you?)
2. A Statuette (a statue wet).
3. Because she prefers her bed low. (Bed-loe.)
4. You're off your base, aren't you?

Charades.

1. Cantankerous.
2. Simoon.

Conundrums.

1. Because he's licked and put in a corner, and made to stick to his letters.
2. Because it's the farthest away from the bark.
3. When he's drawing a conveyance.
4. Because they're Teutonics (two tonics).
5. Foe, or N. M. E.
6. Because it's an internal transport.
7. Because a hot steak is better than a cold chop.

Enigma.

A small unkindness is a great offence.

The Branch of the Church of the Disciples' Sunday-school offers the following books: "The Heir of Redclyffe"; "Stepping Heavenward"; "Little Women," First Part, Miss Alcott; "Little Women," Second Part; "In His Steps; or, What would Jesus do?" C. M. Sheldon. Address Miss Lena L. Carpenter, Church of the Disciples, corner West Brookline Street and Warren Avenue, Boston, Mass.

Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass., offers the leaflet lessons on the life of Jesus which have appeared in the *Cheerful Letter*, as follows: John the Baptist; Jesus in the Temple; The Baptism; The Temptation; Jesus in the Synagogue; Life at Capernaum; A First Lesson on the Sermon on the Mount; Healing the Centurion's Servant, and the Storm on the Sea of Galilee; The Maniac of Gadara; The "Little" Daughter of Jairus; The Young Man of Nain; The Sabbath Controversy; The Sermon on the Mount (in Luke); The Woman who was a Sinner; The Death of John the Baptist and its Effect on the Work of Jesus; Walking on the Water; The Day after the Storm; the Syro-Phœnician Woman; Return from Sidon, and What happened at Decapolis; At Dalmanutha and Bethsaida-Julias; The Confession of Peter; The Transfiguration; Healing the Epileptic; The Quarrel, the Tribute-money, the Little Child; In Peræa; The Last Supper. This offer is to every one interested, not only to shut-ins.

THE EDITOR'S CORNER.

We call attention to a charming little story, "Captain Israel, the Hopeful," lately published, and for sale at 25 Beacon Street, Boston. The paper copy is 25 cents. This is just the thing to send to a shut-in friend. The old captain, with his sunny religion of faith and hope, reminds us of some of George MacDonald's heroes.

To those who want a list adapted to several different ages and conditions, we say, Do not forget Dr. Hale's "In His Name" and "The Man without a Country." Last year Juliana Ewing's exquisite stories were to be found at Jordan, Marsh & Co.'s for a very low price. The "Vision of Sir Launfal," with other of Lowell's poems, may now be had for 15 cents.

Do not, dear friends, run away with the idea that 1899 is the last year of the century. 1900 is the last year. We will try to prove this. A dollar is a hundred cents. A century is a hundred years. Ninety-nine cents do not make a dollar, nor, if a person owed you a hundred dollars, would you be satisfied to receive ninety-nine.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

4. An important part of our mission is to mothers of young families, who feel the importance of their sacred charge and are anxious to learn all that can be known to make of their children good, upright, useful men and women,—good citizens of the country, for which we must all work together if we would make it fulfil its mission among the nations of the world and to the races of mankind. We give books on subjects connected with the training of children, and our columns are open (in our "Mothers' Council") to all who have questions to ask or interesting suggestions to make on topics important to mothers.

WILL ANY MINISTER WHO RECEIVES THIS PAPER KINDLY NOTICE THAT IT IS NOT SENT TO HIM WITH THE OBJECT OF OBTAINING SUBSCRIPTIONS, BUT THAT, IF HE KNOWS OF LONELY PEOPLE LIVING IN REMOTE PLACES ON RANCHES AND PRAIRIES,—ESPECIALLY WHERE THERE ARE FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN,—IT WILL ASSIST THEM AND BE A FAVOR TO US TO SEND THEIR NAMES TO OUR SECRETARY, THAT THEY MAY RECEIVE OUR PAPER FREE AND ENJOY THE ADVANTAGES OF THE OFFERS OF BOOKS, ETC., WHICH ARE PRINTED IN EVERY NUMBER?

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

There will be a meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange on Friday, January 5, at 10.30 A.M., at 25 Beacon Street, Boston.

All interested in this work are cordially invited to be present.

Please notice the change in the address of our Book Club secretary, from 2 Webster Street, Allston, to 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.

In sending requests or offers of books, it is essential to address these communications to the *Book Club* (secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nichols). If addressed to the editor, these letters are in some cases postponed, in others altogether omitted. See directions in every number of *The Cheerful Letter*.

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

DIRECTIONS.

EDITOR,—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Louise Howe, 53 Linden Street, Brookline, or 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to the treasurer, also all changes of address and requests for discontinuance. The subscription is fifty cents a year. If subscribers do not receive the paper regularly, they are requested to notify Miss Howe at once.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Louise Howe, as above. Please give full name and address. Also send name of minister as reference. Some of our members take the paper in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.